PUDUKKOTTAI STATE
NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU

BULLETIN] APRIL 22, 1944 [No. 194

The Editor will gratefully receive contributions, in English or Tamil, of articles on matters of *National War Front interest*, and publish them, if suitable, as signed articles, in the Bulletin. The articles should be short and reach the Editor a week in advance.

LECTURE CXCIV.

"NO RECURRENCE OF FAMINE IN 1944".

BENGAL GOVERNOR'S ASSURANCE

IMPROVED ORGANISATION STOCK-POSITION AND TRANSPORT.

"We are determined to succeed, and we are going to succeed, in averting the recurrence of famine in 1944" was the assurance given by His Excellency R. G. Casey, Governor of Bengal in a broadcast from the All-India Radio Station, Calcutta.

I have been Governor of Bengal for about two months. During this time I have endeavoured to acquaint myself as fully as possible with the state of public affairs in Bengal—and of course, with the food position in particular. I have seen for myself the aftermath of the dark days through which this Province has passed. Looking at Bengal to-day I can see the vast improvement in conditions which must have taken place. At the same time, meeting many men of many classes and callings, I have marked now and again a feeling of uneasiness which, sometimes hardly expressed, seems to lurk in the back of some of their minds. I therefore think it will be useful if I, as Governor, give you the people of Bengal, my appraisement of the situation. My study, which has not been coloured by past events, has led me to certain views.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 1943 AND 1944.

There is general agreement that the principal causes of last year's disaster were—a shortage of rice—the principal foodstuff of Bengal-poor crops, transport difficulties, the inevitable economic dislocation of war, and a general administration which had never been designed to meet the very abnormal problems with which it was so suddenly faced.

How far do these causes operate to-day? I was asked recently why I believed that there would be no famine in Bengal in 1944. What, I was asked, was the difference

between 1943 and 1944 that prompted me to say this? My answer was as follows:—In 1943 there was a real shortage of rice in Bengal, owing to a poor crop and the disaster of the cyclone. This year there has been a very good crop.

Last year the great city of Calcutta had to be fed by Bengal. This year Calcutta is getting 640,000 tons of foodgrains from the rest of India outside Bengal—that is one and three quarter crores of maunds. And so we are relieved of the greatest single deficit area in Bengal—Greater Calcutta itself with its huge population of over four million people.

Last year, we had practically speaking no organisation to cope with the procurement and distribution of grain—nor had we any stocks of grain on which to draw. This year, we have a large organisation that is being contantly improved to cope with all Bengal's foodgrain problems—and we have substantial quantities of grain in reserve.

Last year, our transport—by rail, road and water—was inadequate. This year we have organised—and are constantly improving—our transport arrangements.

These are the principal reasons that prompt me to say that there should be no recurrence of famine in Bengal in 1944—and that the price of rice should fall.

PROBLEM OF PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION.

I am convinced that there is plenty of rice in Bengal for all the people of Bengal. The difficulty is that it is unevenly distributed—some districts have too much and others too little. Our task is to spread the butter evenly on the bread. To do so we have to buy part of the surplus from those who have more than they need, and distribute it to those who have less than they need. In short it is the task of procurement and distribution.

Should there be any individuals who believe that, in our efforts to procure rice from surplus districts for deficit districts we may take too much from the surplus districts and so expose them to subsequent scarcity—I can assure you that this will not come about. The possibility has been forseen, and no risk will be taken in this respect.

We are working strenuously at this task of procurement and distribution. We are in close touch with the Viceroy and the Government of India—and we are seeking and getting all the help that New Delhi can possibly give us by way of additional administrative staff, by way of foodgrains from the rest of India, by way of extra shipping and river craft and by way of additional consumer goods.

We are determined to succeed, and we are going to succeed, in averting the recurrence of famine in 1944.

However, I am obliged to say that there are some people—I don't think very many—but there are some—who are so lacking in a sense of public responsibility—that they advise cultivators with surplus rice beyond any possible need of their own not to sell their rice to Government. I cannot too strongly condemn such malicious propaganda. I can only imagine that it is indulged in for political ends. The lives of a great many fellow countrymen are dependent on our ability to spread rice equitably and fairly and at a reasonable price throughout the Province. Those many lives are directly menaced by such mischievous propaganda—and I can only hope, in the name of humanity, that it will cease.

It is the clear duty of those with an excess of rice over their needs to put that excess into circulation at a price which yields a reasonable profit—and both those who incite them to withhold their surplus stocks—and those who do so withhold stocks—are endangering the lives of large numbers of their fellow countrymen.

"Some may say that in condemning this attitude to which I have referred I am taking sides in a controversial political issue. I am not concerned with party politics If I am taking any side—I am taking the side of the people of Bengal.

BENGAL'S GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.

For the policy of Government in respect of the food problem, I have no small share of responsibility; and you may be sure that I shall exercise the utmost vigilance, both as to the policy adopted and to the way it is carried out. So far as those outside the Government are concerned, I lack this ability for watchfulness and criticism. That is why I have spoken in the way I have.

There are vast numbers of human beings in this Province. The great part of them are poor people living in great simplicity, and largely dependent for their well or ill being on the bounty of nature, and on the activities of the relative handful of their fellowmen who concern themselves with public affairs in one way or other. The moral responsibility on us is overwhelming to do our utmost for the tens of millions of Bengalis who cannot help themselves.

There is another point that it is my duty to put frankly before you. As I have said, Bengal has this year enough food to feed itself, to provide seed for the next crop and to make prudent and reasonable insurance for the future. The whole of India knows this. What, then, if we fail to organise our province and to run our own affairs properly, and if we drift back into something approaching the state of affairs that existed last year? The answer which I think the rest of India would give us—and would be justified in giving—would be this :—" You had plenty this year and still you have made a mess of things. Other parts of India made sacrifices in order that you might have enough. What of the other areas in India that have their problems and troubles no less than Bengal? You have made your bed and you must lie on it". These are serious words. I hope and believe that they will never have to be said to us.

We are doing and will do everything in our power as regards the procurement and distribution of foodgrains. The only thing that can possibly defeat these arrangements is lack of whole-hearted co-operation by the public.

REHABILITATION MEASURES.

As a new-comer, I have been struck by the very obvious signs of the terrible strain which has been placed on Bengal in the last year. My Government has undertaken and will increasingly undertake measures for physical rehabilitation. Let me give you a few of the many facts. The numbers of hospitals and beds have been vastly increased within the last three months, and more are being set up. Epidemic and other disease is, generally speaking, under control and declining. The public health staff has been strengthened by more than one thousand additional hands to deal with any possible future outbreak. Twelve million inoculations against cholera and vaccinations for small-pox have been performed during the last five months, and the figure has now reached the very high rate of more than a million a week. I need not remind those of my listeners in the muffasil of the first class service given to us by the Army by way of medical relief, particularly through their mobile units and hospitals, which have treated about 750,000 patients in the last five months.

On the economic side, we have taken action to enable restoration of lands to poor cultivators forced to sell lest they should starve. A great many work-houses have been set up where destitutes are being taught to earn a living—and a great deal more is about

to be done in this regard. Along with the expansion of private orphanages, thousands of orphans'and deserted children are being cared for in temporary Government orphanages, and we are only on the threshold of what is going to be done. More than 1,750 milk canteens are distributing milk foods to over 100,000 children and to nursing and expectant mothers. Special measures are being taken to help the landless, and particularly the fishermen and potters. The acheivement is not small, and what is in sight is much greater. And we do not aim at merely temporary alleviation. We hope to achieve something lasting by way of better administration, better health and better living.

PLEA FOR CO-OPERATION AND CONFIDENCE.

But what of moral rehabilitation? What of those whose minds are still darkened by tragedy, who have lost confidence in themselves, in the future, and in our ability to prevent what has happened happening again? I do not say that a feeling of pessimism is altogether unnatural. But I do say that it is unjustified. I look to the future with confidence, and I appeal for confidence in the administration of which I am the head, for confidence in the determination and ability of Government to prevent another catastrophe. Given confidence, our path is straight and our goal is clear.

For my part, I see no reason to believe that the people of Bengal will fail to play their part. They came through last year's ordeal with as much credit as could be expected of people subjected to so terrible a test.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

(A)—LEADING EVENTS.

10—4—44 (Monday).	Russians capture *ODESSA*, the important Black Sea Port.
	Russians launch new offensive against the *CRIMEA* and occupy *ARMYANSH*.
	Japs evacuate *GASMATA* and *CAPE HOSKINS* in New *BRITAIN*.
	American Air Force and R. A. F. attack targets in *FRANCE* and *BELGIUM* both by day and night.
11—4—44 (Tuesday).	Russians capture *KERCH* and the important railway junction of *JANKOI* (both in the Crimea).
	American bombers raid airfields in *FRANCE* and *BELGIUM*.
12—4—44 (Wednesday).	Russians occupy *AKMANAY* in the Crimea.
	Heavy daylight attacks by U. S. A. A. F. on targets in *FRANCE* and *BELGIUM* continue.
13—4—44 (Thursday).	Russians capture *SIMFEROPOL*, *EUPATORIA* and *FEODOSIA*.
	Two-way assault on *EUROPEAN FORTRESS* continues.

(A)—LEADING EVENTS—*cont.*

14—4—44 (Friday).	Australians capture *BOGADJIM* Port in *N. GUINEA.*
	Gen. *VATUTIN*, the Saviour of *MOSCOW* and *STALINGRAD* passes away.
15—4—44 (Saturday).	Allied heavy Bombers raid the Rumanian Capital of *BUCHAREST*, and the oil town of *PLOESTI* in daylight.
	Russians capture *TARNOPOL* in the Ukraine.
16—4—44 (Sunday).	American heavy Bombers raid *BELGRADE* (the Yugoslav capital).
	Russians reach the suburbs of *SEBASTOPOL* in the Crimea.
17—4—44 (Monday).	The British Foreign Office announces dramatic second front Regulation prohibiting foreign diplomats from leaving *LONDON.*
	Badoglio's government in Italy resigns.
	Allies raid *SOFIA* (capital of Bulgaria) and *BELGRADE* (capital of Yugoslavia).

(B) NEWS IN BRIEF.

Russia.—The War on Russian soil is drawing to a close. On the Black Sea Coast, following the occupation of ODESSA, OVIDOPOL on the Dniester, has been captured.

In a week's offensive, most of the CRIMEA has been cleared, and the liberation of SEBASTOPOL, the last remaining centre, is in progress. During the week, the following German strongholds in the CRIMEA were taken :-ARMYANSH, JANKOI, AKMANAY, KERCH, SIMFEROPOL, FEODOSIA, EUPATORIA, YALTA, and BALACLAVA.

Inside RUMANIA, the Red Army has advanced between the Pruth and the Sereth, and taken more than 200 localities. Zhukov and Koniev have linked up between the Sereth and DOROHOI. The Germans have taken over PLOESTI where are the oil-fields.

The Russians have taken PASCANI, west of JASSY, FALTICENI at the foot of the CARPATHIANS and TARNOPOL south of LWOW.

Italy.—The CASSINO front remains quiet. On the GARIGLIANO front there have been some artillery duels. Enemy raids in the beach-head area are being repulsed.

The Allies carried out a surprise attack on the Pontine Marshes.

Air War over Europe.—The two-way assault from British and Italian bases has become more intense than ever. The average number of Allied aircraft going out daily for the attacks is now about 2,000. The chief targets, besides the 'invasion' coast and the German industrial centres, are the BALKAN capitals—BUDAPEST, BUCHAREST and BELGRADE, and the PLOESTI oil-fields. For details of the raids the reader is referred to the tabular statement which is attached.

The Pacific.—The softening of the TRUK area and the neighbouring island groups continues. The major part of NEW BRITAIN has been reduced. The Japanese have abandoned GASMATA and CAPE HOSKINS.

Four more atolls have been captured in the MARSHALLS.

BOGADJIM, on Astralobe Bay on the North coast of NEW GUINEA, has fallen.

Burmese Frontier.–In the MOGAUNG valley, WAKAWNG, TINGRING, MUNGU-GAHTAWN and HSAINSHINGYANG have been captured.

After theinitial push towards KOHIMA and IMPHAL, the enemy has made no progress in the MANIPUR area. On the other hand, he is being hit back heavily here. Japanese road-blocks and hill positions separating the Allied forces on the KOHIMA—DIMAPUR Road are being cleared. In six weeks the Japanese have lost 4,100 men in the MANIPUR area in land fighting alone.

The South-East ASIA Command has shifted its Headquarters to CEYLON, and the Eastern Air Command, its Headquarters to CALCUTTA.

ALLIED AIR RAIDS.

9—4—44. (Sunday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—(92 enemy planes shot down or destroyed).
Aircraft factories at POSEN (Poland), TUTOW, WARNEMUNDE (N. E. Germany) and MARIENBURG (Prussia).

NIGHT:—(2 Allied planes missing).
Railway targets near PARIS and at LILLE.
Objectives at MANNHEIM and in Western GERMANY.
Laying mines in enemy waters.
The railway junction at LWOW (Poland).

ITALY.

Rail communications in the ROME area.
Shipping off the DALMATIAN coast.
Rail targets, gun positions and the harbour at ANCONA.

RUSSIA.

(30 enemy planes shot down).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap bases in the MARSHALLS.
The air base at RABAUL (N. Britain).
Barges off New IRELAND.

BURMA.

The Ry. junction at YWATAUNG.
Docks at RANGOON.
Communications and supply lines in the ARAKAN, KALADAN, MAYU, CHIN Hills and CHINDWIN areas.
Rolling stock and railway installations near RANGOON and in the MONYWA–MANDALAY area.

10—4—44 (Monday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—(5 enemy planes shot down).
Railway yards at NAMUR.
Aircraft repair works in the EVERE and VILORDE area.
Aircraft factory at BOURGES.
Military objectives in the PAS DE CALAIS area.

NIGHT:—(22 enemy planes destroyed).
Railway targets in FRANCE and BELGIUM.
Railway yards and depots at GHENT (Belgium) and TOURS, TERGNIER, AULNOYE and LAON (France).
Objectives in the RUHR and at HANOVER.
Laying mines in enemy waters.

ITALY.

(1 enemy plane destroyed; 2 Allied planes missing).
The ports of PLOMBINO and SAN STEFANO.
Railway bridges at ORVIETO, ATTIGLIANO and POGGIBONSI.
Bridges at FANO, POPOLI and FALCONARA.
Shipping along the DALMATIAN coast.
A factory at MARINA DI PISA.

RUSSIA.

(31 enemy planes destroyed).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

The Jap bases at RABAUL (N. Britain) and HOLLANDIA (N. Guinea).
The airfield at PONAPE (Carolines).
Enemy cargo ships off WOLEAI island (Carolines).
MATUA and NEKOTAN (Kuriles).

BURMA.

Bridges at SINTHE and THITABIN.
Jetty areas at MOULMEIN.
Targets at MAWLU, SHWEGU and MYITKYINA.
The Ry. station at PEGU.
Gun positions, dumps and rivercraft in the ARAKAN, MAYU, KALADAN, CHIN Hills and CHINDWIN valley areas.
Buildings and locomotives in South BURMA.

11—4—44 (Tuesday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—(126 enemy planes shot down; 80 Allied planes missing).
Aircraft factories at OSCHERSLEBEN and BERNSBURG.
Industrial targets at ROSTOCK and ARNIMSWALDE.
Other targets in GERMANY.
Aerial battles over FRANCE and BELGIUM.
Airfields in FRANCE and BELGIUM.

Night:—
Railway stations and marshalling yards at AACHEN.
Targets at HANOVER.
Objectives in Western GERMANY.
Laying mines in enemy waters.

ITALY.

Communicatins and dumps in the battle areas.
Shipping off the DALMATIAN coast.

RUSSIA.

(47 enemy planes shot down).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap-held Atolls in the MARSHALLS.
Jap bases in the CAROLINES.
The airfield at RABAUL (N. Britain).

BURMA.

The bridge at NATTALIN.
Targets in the BANMAUK-NAUNGKAN area.
Enemy positions in the ARAKAN, KALADAN, MAYU, CHIN Hills and CHINDWIN Valley areas.

12—4—44. (Wednesday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—

3 factories at WEINER NEUSTADT (Austria).
Military objectives along the FRENCH and BELGIUM coast line.
Airfields at COURTRAI and COXYDE (Belgium).
Railway yards at St. GHISLAIN (Belgium) and HIRSIN (France).
Locomotive works at HAINE ST. PIERRE.

NIGHT:—(2 Allied planes missing)
Railway yards at OSNABRUCK (Germany) and BUDAPEST (Capital of Hungary).
Laying mines in enemy waters.

ITALY.

(31 enemy planes destroyed; 14 Allied planes missing).
Bridges at ATTIGLIANO, ORVIETO, CECINA and ALBENGA.
Supply dumps, rail and road traffic, bridges and shipping on the east coast of ITALY.

RUSSIA.

(38 enemy planes destroyed).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Targets at RABAUL (N. Britian) in the WEWAK area and HANSA BAY (N. Guinea).
The enemy positions at BOUGAINVILLE (Solomons).
MAMOTI ATOLL (Carolines).
The naval bases at PARAMUSHIRO and SHIMIZU.
SHIAHKOTAN and **MATUA** Islands (Kuriles).

BURMA.

The railway station at MOULMEIN.
PROME.
Enemy installations north of MOGAUNG.
Targets in the KAMAING and MYITKYINA areas.
TAUNGNI.
Railway area north of MAWLU.
Enemy positions in the ARAKAN, KALADAN, MAYU, CHIN Hills and CHINDWIN Valley areas.
Rivercraft in S. BURMA.
Barracks at NAGORN SAWARN.
Transport in the THANNGDUT area.

13—4—44. (Thursday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—

(51 enemy planes shot down; Many others on the ground; 44 Allied planes missing.)
Aircraft works at AUGSBURG and OBERHAUSEN.
Airforce installations at LECHFELD.
Ball-bearing works at SCHWEINFURT.
Aircraft works at GYER (Hungary).
Railway targets in Northern FRANCE and BELGIUM.
Railway centre at NAMUR.

NIGHT:—

Objectives in BERLIN and Western GERMANY.
Laying mines in enemy waters.

ITALY.

Communications behind the German army.
Gun positions and dumps in the battle areas.

RUSSIA.

(18 enemy planes shot down).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap bases in the KURILES.
Airfields at WEWAK and RABAUL (N. Britain).

BURMA.

Storage tanks at MAGWE.
Targets at TAUNGUP and KYAUKPU.
Enemy transport, petrol dumps and bridges in KALMYO and TAMU areas.
Motor vehicles in the SHWEBO-ONBAUK-YEU area.
Enemy positions in the KALADAN, MAYU, CHIN Hills and CHINDWIN Valley areas.

14—4—44 (Friday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—

Airfields and other military objectives in FRANCE and DENMARK.
The airfield at KASTRUP.

NIGHT—

No information.

ITALY.

(4 enemy planes shot down; 5 Allied planes missing.)
The airfield at VITERBO (ROME).
Railway yards at LEGHORN.
Railway bridges at CERTALDO, BUCINE, AREZZO, CECINA, SPOLETO GIULIANOVA and NARMI.
Supply dumps, gun positions and landing ground at FURBARA.
The harbours at LEGHORN, SAN STEFANO and PIOMBINO.

RUSSIA.

(24 enemy planes shot down).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Supply and defence areas in the WEWAK area.
Supply dumps near PARITTWLTI point.
Supply and bivouac areas at WAKDE and on SAUA River (Bougainville).
KIETA and NUMANUMA.
Supply areas at BORPOP (N. Ireland).
Airfields at RABAUL (N. Britain).
Barges in ATALIKLIKUN Bay.

RUSSIA.

(78 Axis planes shot down).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Coastal villages and bivouac areas along the New GUINEA coast.
PONAPE.
Other islands in the CAROLINES.
A Jap tanker off ANT Island.
The Jap base of RABAUL.

BURMA.

The airfield at HEHO.
Enemy ground positions in the YEU, SHWEBO and MAWLU areas.
Rail yards at PEGU.
Targets in the TAMU KALEMYO, PAUNGBYIN, HOMALIN and INDAW areas.
Enemy positions in the KAMAING, MAWLU and MOHNYN areas.

Motor transport in the SHWEBO, HUNTERS BAY and Upper CHINDWIN areas.
Targets in the ARAKAN, MAYU, KALADAN, CHIN Hills and CHINDWIN areas.

BURMA.

Enemy concentrations, motor transport and river-craft in the ARAKAN, MAYU, CHIN Hills and CHINDWIN Valley areas.
Communications in South BURMA.

15—4—44 (Saturday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY :—(18 enemy planes shot down; many more destroyed on the ground; 30 Allied planes missing).

Railway targets at **BUCHAREST** (**Capital of Rumania**).
The oil town of PLOESTI.
Airfields in GERMANY and German occupied territory.
Targets in Northern FRANCE.

Night :—
No information.

ITALY.

Communications and bridges behind the battle areas.

ENEMY AIR RAIDS.

10—4—44 (Monday).

BRITAIN.

No enemy air activity.

RUSSIA and FAR EAST.

No information.

11—4—44 (Tuesday).

BRITAIN, RUSSIA and FAR EAST.

No information.

12—4—44 (Wednesday).

BRITAIN.

Places in S.E. ENGLAND, the HOME COUNTIES and the Greater LONDON area.

ITALY.

Allied positions in the ANZIO beach-head area.

RUSSIA and FAR EAST.

No information.

13—4—44 (Thursday).

BRITAIN.

South-East ENGLAND and HOME COUNTIES.

RUSSIA and FAR EAST.

No information.

14—4—44. (Friday).

BRITAIN, RUSSIA and FAR EAST.

No enemy air activity.

15—4—44. (Saturday).

BRITAIN, RUSSIA and FAR EAST.

No information.

16—4—44. (Sunday).

BRITAIN, RUSSIA and FAR EAST.

No enemy air activity.

SIDE LIGHTS.

WILL THE MOUNTAINS SAVE GERMANY? With the triumphant progress of Zhukov, Koniev and Malinovsky in the CRIMEA in POLAND and RUMANIA the battle for RUSSIA may be said to be drawing to a close. But for a strip of country in the north, which will also no doubt be recovered as soon as the snow melts and drains off, and the roads harden and become fit for large troop movements, the war on Russian soil has almost ended, and the battle for the Reich has begun, at its outskirts at the foot of the CARPATHIANS.

Will the CARPATHIANS save the Reich? Hitler thinks that they will. He considers himself master of mountain warfare, forgetting that more than once others have outmatched him in this game. Not long ago, the Russians met him in the CAUCASUS, and from that time Hitler has known nothing but retreat, encirclement and surrender.

In the African campaign he relied on the mountains in TUNISIA, but the British and American armies taught him an unforgettable lesson. He was driven out of the entire continent, and surrendered whole armies. The mountains of SICILY did not save Hitler.

At the foot of the Appennines in ITALY he is making a desperate stand, but the slow progress of the Allies in this area is not due so much to his resistance as to the nature of the terrain. Here the mountains running right across the battlefield block the Allied line of advance.

But the CARPATHIANS are a different proposition. These mountains do not lie across but lie alongside the line of advance. Here the passes are wide and low.

IS HITLER'S EASTERN FRONT CRACKING? It looks as if it were. Whether on the Dniester, the Bug, or the Pruth, or the Black Sea, or in the CRIMEA, one general feature is the absence of any pitched battle; rather what is observed everywhere is the emptiness of the battlefield, and a disolution and disintegration of the Nazi armies for the purposes of escape. There is no front; there are only pockets or retreating sectors.

▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾

'ELBOW-ROOM'. Goebbels' latest invention to explain the débacle is the phrase, 'elbow-room'. One wonders what it exactly means. According to him, the ring of encirclement round GERMANY has just now been broken, and elbow-room has been gained: but as events indicate, it would appear rather that the Reich will soon have no elbow-room left. The *Lebensraum*, which not long ago extended from BERLIN to STALINGRAD, and even reached out to the CAUCASUS, has now shrunk to the Carpathian foothills.

▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾

A MEETING OF THE QUISLINGS. In despair, Hitler is summoning a meeting of his Quislings at BERCHTESGADEN, including Mussolini, probably brought from his Italian prison house, Antonescu, the Dictator of RUMANIA, Sztojay, the Premier of HUNGARY, Laval, the Vichy Premier, Vidkung, Quisling of NORWAY, Pavelitch from CROATIA, Dr. Hacha from BOHEMIA and the Japanese ambassador in BERLIN.

▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾

GOEBBELS TO RULE IN BERLIN. Strangely enough, the lying propagandist of GERMANY has been elevated to the Presidentship of BERLIN, to do what even Himmler has failed to accomplish. BERLIN, the most bombed city in the world to-day, is showing every sign of indiscipline. According to the *Essenger National Zeithung*, even the usual Nazi signs and salutes are not respected. The *Heil Hitler* shout has now lost its gusto; the Nazi salute has now become a listless and cheerless arm-lift. There is disorganisation of the administrative machinery of the city. After a raid, men and women do not even turn up for rescue work. Nazi authority, hitherto exercised by Himmler's death-heads and Adolf Hitler's body guards, has apparently failed, and a clown has been called in to prop up the morale. But, as the *Times* observes 'the lies of Goebbels have now lost their attractiveness and possess none of their old dazzling touches'. His buffoonery has turned into lament. In his latest *Das Reich* article as we reported last week, he described the present situation in GERMANY to be as grave as in 1918.

▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾

EUROPE OF THE FUTURE. Though Goebbels told his party followers the other day that GERMANY has already achieved the political shaping of EUROPE he has left them in doubt whether the Nazis will be left with any EUROPE to shape. Meanwhile the Allies have taken up that task. This is the significance of M. Molotov's sudden and unusual summons to Press Correspondents, and his announcement to them and in a broadcast to the Rumanians that the Russians entered RUMANIA not as conquerors, but in the spirit in which the British and the Americans entered ITALY, that is, to liberate. While RUSSIA will insist on the 1940 border and will deal with Quislings as they deserve she will respect Rumanian integrity and keep its social order intact. The Molotov Declaration, says the *Times*, is one of the greatest documents of the war, a restatement of the

pledges of the Atlantic Charter. We do not know how far the Quislings will take the warning, but it is the last chance for them to rectify their previous record of aggression and to save themselves from the general wreckage.

Since the bombing of BUCHAREST and BUDAPEST there is confusion in these Satellite Capitals. Vast crowds are reported to be leaving the cities. It is doubtful if the Germans can long keep these Governments docile. The Germans make sorry propaganda when they talk of forming strategic reserves of men and materials in these areas to be used when the vital moment arrives. They say that when that moment comes, the German armies in the BALKANS will prevent a stab in the back by the Red Army. But they forget that in providing against a stab in the future they are actually receiving frontal bludgeon blows in the present.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

WHICH IS THE SECOND FRONT? So, according to the enemy's own notions, the unopened Second front has already become Front No. I, and is deciding Nazi strategy on the Russian front. This old First front has now become a secondary front. Now we say this is a compliment to the invasion preparations now going on in BRITAIN, and particularly to the Anglo-American bombing which is softening the enemy. As the bombs crash further into BUCHAREST and BUDAPEST, in fact, all around GERMANY, it is no wonder that German Commentators are puzzled, and do not know which is the first, and which the second front.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

CYNICISM. We are aware that because the second front has not yet been opened, it has become a theme of jesting with a type of irresponsible people. As this tendency may, in course of time, endanger cynicism, nervousness, and lack of concentration on the immense tasks of the war it is well to forewarn the general reader.

Firstly, people should know that the timing has not only been fixed, but was fixed long ago.

Secondly, the date is kept secret for strategic reasons.

Thirdly, the cynic is angry only because the secret is well kept and he is not one of the few who are in the know.

Fourthly, the cynic's vexation is shared by the enemy also, who is kept completely in the dark. He does not know when and where the attack will fall and in what strength and manner. On that account he dare not move a single platoon from the western to the eastern front where he is hard pressed.

Fifthly, the Russians are in the secret, and that is why there is very little agitation now in the Russian Press over the opening of a Second front.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

FLOODING HOLLAND. In the event of an invasion, the Germans threaten to open the flood gates of HOLLAND and let the sea in. Like VENICE, HOLLAND is a country salvaged from the sea. HOLLAND's lagoons and canals have in the past saved her from foreign domination. But unfortunately, the weapon hitherto used for her defence may be used for her destruction. The Swiss report that part of the country has been already inundated. If so the flooded areas will be useless for years for agriculture. GERMANY is callous. GERMANY will no doubt be made to pay reparation when the hour of retribution comes. But meanwhile HOLLAND suffers.

THE ALLIES AND THE NEUTRALS. Now that the critical and final stages of the war are approaching, the Allies feel that the time has come to take a definite stand, not only towards Hitler's satellites but also towards those neutral States, whose unneutral attitude has the unfortunate effect of prolonging the duration of the war. SPAIN continues to smuggle oil. TURKEY supplies Chrome, and SWEDEN ball-bearings to the enemy. Towards these States the Allies have now adopted a firmer attitude. A joint Anglo-American note has been issued to SWEDEN. Mr. Cordell Hull, the American Secretary of State, has made it plain that the neutrals must know that their own future depends on an Allied victory, and that every aid they give the enemy will be employed for their own destruction. On the other hand, they have nothing to fear from the Allies. The Atlantic Charter, the MOSCOW Declaration, the CAIRO and TEHERAN Decisions guarantee international justice and fairplay. AMERICA, BRITAIN, the Soviet Union and CHINA will co-operate to turn victory into an enduring peace.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

VATUTIN, We regret to report the death of Vatutin, the hero of MOSCOW and STALINGRAD. His last act was to drive the Germans to the 1939 Polish frontier. He excelled in the use of artillery. He was an inventor and improvisor of military methods. For his generalship he was awarded the Order of Suvorov, the highest Soviet honour.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

AIR-WAR. A new phase of intensive air-campaign, started two weeks ago, is continuing with undiminished vigour over Nazi EUROPE. Nazi centres of aircraft production, and the invasion areas on the west coast, are being attacked by 1,500 to 2,000 aircraft a day. The two-way assault from BRITAIN and ITALY is all over enemy EUROPE. The blows on the Hungarian and Rumanian capitals have unnerved the Satellite States. All EUROPE knows that the bombers of BRITAIN and AMERICA now range freely everywhere, by night and by day. Commenting on the present developments of the air-war, Sir Arthur Harris, Commander-in-Chief of the Bomber Command writes :—

"There are now four times as many German fighters on the western as on the eastern front. It will be nothing short of a miracle if the German armies on all fronts, with their war factories and towns crumbling to dust behind their backs, prove to be anything like as well armed in 1944 as they were in 1943. We may confidently expect the bomber to take his other weapons from the German soldier as effectively as it has already been taking aircraft, which once gave him air cover and close support.

'One result of Anglo-American bombing has been the successful wrecking of co-operation between the German army and the German air force, compelling each to fight by itself, in a manner for which the German High Command has laid no plans. There have been moments, especially during February 1944, when sudden reductions in Anglo-American bomber losses proved how near the *Luftwaffe* was getting to exhaustion, after fighting the whole run of the offensive battles, both by day and by night.'

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

THE U-BOAT WAR. The Churchill–Roosevelt report on the U-boat war has been issued for March. During the month, the U-boats operated from the Barents Sea to the Indian Ocean, and tried in vain to disrupt the flow of supplies to RUSSIA by the northern route. The Allied shipping losses, a little higher than in February, were mainly incurred in the distant seas. The rate of sinking of the U-boats was fully maintained.

THE FIGHT FROM PALAU. The disappearance of the Japanese fleet from the PALAU Islands, well to the west of TRUK, calls for notice. As a military commentator has said, the South-west Pacific waters have ceased to be Japanese. They have become the *mare nostrum* of AMERICA. The 'Tokyo Express' ships, as they were once called, which carried Japanese supplies to their S. W. Pacific possessions, have now become 'Evacuation Specials' for the removal of what can be saved from the N. SOLOMONS, the BISMARCKS and the CAROLINES.

The PALAU ISLANDS lie about 1,350 sea miles south of TOKYO and, what is more significant, only a third of this distance from the PHILIPPINES. The object of the assault on PALAU is to deny the enemy the use of his bases in the Central Pacific.

It may also be noted that in these operations the naval forces under Admiral Nimitz have combined with Genl. MacArthur's air forces in the closest concert. All important bases on the Japanese life-line are under attack from both sea and air.

The hasty flight of the Japanese ships from PALAU, on the approach of the American Task force, is only a continuance of the enemy's manoeuvre practised at TRUK. Ever since the failure of the Japanese naval action off the GUADALCANAL area, in November 1942, the enemy has fought shy of accepting a challenge, and now, whether in the MARSHALLS, or at TRUK, or at PALAU he has exercised his discretion more than his valour, and has preferred flight to fight.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

PACIFIC PRESSURE. The following account of the present Pacific war is adopted from *The Times of India* of April 11 :—

With the completion of the capture of the ADMIRALTY ISLANDS and other groups like ST. MATTHIAS, north-west of RABAUL, 100,000 Japanese troops are virtually stranded without supplies. Nine out of ten enemy vessels attempting to bring them supplies are destroyed by air and naval action. On BOUGAINVILLE ISLAND, the Japanese attempt to break through to the Empress Augusta Bay has ended in failure. In order to open a supply line from the PHILIPPINES along the north coast of NEW GUINEA the Japanese built up a powerful air base at HOLLANDIA, but last week HOLLANDIA was hit by a series of raids, and the entire enemy force of 288 planes there was destroyed. Farther north, the attack at TRUK continues. U.S. strategy is now to isolate TRUK as RABAUL has been isolated.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

NIPPON'S PHANTOUR VICTORY. According to the latest reports the IMPHAL (MANIPUR) plain is now entirely in our hands, and in the hills near by our offensive operations are continuing. It is also stated that operations to clear the KOHIMA–DIMAPUR road are progressing satisfactorily. In the face of such facts, the TOKYO radio has the effrontery to broadcast that Mountbatten's Headquarters have admitted the fall of KOHIMA. This is the Axis way. Such lies repeated *ad nauseam* have become disgusting.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

H. Q. OF S-E. ASIA COMMAND. There will be no surprise in the news that the S-E. ASIA Command's H. Q. have been transferred from NEW DELHI to CEYLON, when it is recalled that the S-E. ASIA Front, extending from BURMA southward, excludes INDIA and includes CEYLON. INDIA, in spite of all its importance, is only a base of supplies to this Command, while

CEYLON is in the centre of the S-E. ASIA Command areas. CEYLON is also the main naval base of the Command. The transfer of the Command, while therefore natural forecasts an early intensification of the war for the recapture of Japanese-held territory in S-E. ASIA.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

ON THE EVE OF GREAT EVENTS. Stringent security restrictions are being introduced both in BRITAIN and INDIA, which foreshadow that big events are near at hand, such as the opening of a second front in EUROPE, and the starting of new operations against the Japanese in S.-E. ASIA. In BRITAIN, foreign diplomats and couriers have been banned from leaving BRITAIN, and their official Correspondence has, been placed under censorship, the U.S., RUSSIA and the British Dominions alone being excluded, but not EIRE.

In INDIA, the Government have extended their censorship to non-official internal postal and telegraphic correspondence. The reasons are obvious. To quote the Press Communiqué issued from NEW DELHI :—

"Military security is vital to any nation at war. Its importance is increased when the enemy is within reach of a country's land and sea frontiers. It becomes even more important when the enemy is thrown on the defensive, but is still in contact and expects an attack, for he will then redouble his efforts to obtain information from within the base from which an attack on him can be launched. INDIA has now reached such a stage, as it has become a major base for offensive operations against the Japanese, and in view of its increasing operational importance.'

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ▼

A WARNING. The communiqué continues :—

'Despite widespread propaganda to stop careless talk and careless correspondence, there is still a considerable element, both in official and non-official circles, which fails to understand what extensive harm can result from gossip, especially in correspondence about matters of military importance. Not only the lives of Indian and Allied soldiers, sailors and airmen, but also the security of Indian civilian lives and property, are endangered by the leakage of military information.

'The majority of the Public and the Press in particular, fully appreciate the need for military security, but it is clear that owing to the thoughtlessness and carelessness of a small minority the essential degree of military security has not yet been reached.'

The communiqué ends with the warning that any one found guilty of the offence of correspondence causing breach of security will be severely dealt with.

HITLER'S LAST STRAW.

(By Lieutenant-General Sir Douglas Brownrigg).

There was only one explanation of Marshal Koniev's rapid advance from the Bug to the Dniester—that Manstein's army group had been cut in two. The fact that this once proud force has now been divided into two separate commands under Marshals von Manstein and von Kleist confirms the truth of this suspicion. Hitler has accepted the breach in his

eastern wall as an unpalatable fact, and has immediately set about regrouping his forces to meet the new situation. His intention now appears to be something on the following lines.

Von Kleist is to make the best of a bad job in the Pruth and Danube valleys, and delay the advance of Marshal Koniev and General Malinovsky for as long as possible without getting any more protruding bits of his own armies cut off. Delay in this area is of local as well as of general strategic importance. Hitler wants the use of the Ploesti refineries as long as possible; and he also wants to give his forces in the Crimea every chance of getting away by sea, before Russian sea and air forces can increase their pressure against the coastal traffic along the western shores of the Black Sea.

Von Manstein's army group presumably has the rôle of breaking out to the west to temporary safety between Lvov and the Carpathians, leaving no doubt part of his forces with instructions to retire slowly south-west to cover the passes leading over the Carpathians to Hungary.

Meanwhile, the German Staff has scraped up another 100,000 men and sent them to Hungary, some to cow the Hungarians, and some to occupy the Carpathian passes, and let through more bits of Manstein's battered army group which has been prevented from escaping north-westwards by Marshal Zhukov's pursuing armies.

For the first two years of the war, Germany had the initiative, and first Britain alone then Britain and her allies, could only follow a policy of puttying up holes opened by German blows, whilst building up strength for a counter-stroke. El Alamein and Stalingrad saw the initative pass. Since, it has been Germany that has been forced to use putty. But unlike the Allies she is compelled to use it as the only means of covering her increasing weakness. The 100,000 Germans sent to Hungary, and the regalvanised Hungarian army, represent the putty with which it is hoped that the crack between the two newly-formed German army groups can be filled. If that putty proves unequal to its task where can more be found ?

There are 50 divisions tied up in Western Europe awaiting the opening of the western offensive; another 25 are fully employed holding off the forces of General Alexander. Tito in Yugoslavia occupies the attention perhaps of 15 more. None of these can be withdrawn without inviting an opening of another dangerous breach. So, in my view, the German Generals on the eastern front will be told to hold on with what they have, whilst Hitler stakes his all on repelling the great Anglo-American offensive launched from Britain. So let me repeat what I have said before—there is no man in Europe more impatient for the opening of the western front—than Hitler. In it he may sense his doom; but where else can he find another straw to clutch at ?

GERMAN ARMIES' LIMITS OF WITHDRAWAL.

(From the Daily Telegraph).

The Wehrmacht, its strength already drained by its prodigious losses, has had forced upon it a preoccupation elsewhere.

There, on the second front, the aerial invasion is already at its height, and invasion by sea and land hangs poised like a sword of Damocles; come what may the Wehrmacht

must gather its forces to meet the stroke. The consequences are manifest on the eastern front: the *Luftwaffe* has already all but vanished, while the German army's shrinking cadres find themselves far outmatched by the Red Army which surges on like a remorseless tide. Stalin is out for a break-through. Nor is this a purely Russian strategy—it is the true strategy of coalition. Clearly, the situation made desperate for the Germans on the eastern front creates an opportunity for that most hazardous of all ventures, the launching of the second front. This safely launched will in its turn consummate Stalin's victory.

Everywhere, army groups of Kleist and Manstein are nearing the limits of their withdrawal—limits where they must stand and fight. These limits are set by hard economic and political necessity. Without the oil of Ploesti, and only in a lesser degree of the Hungarian, Austrian and Galician oilfields, oil which in the aggregate amounts to little less than half of Germany's total output of mineral oil, including synthetics, without likewise the synthetic oil plants and other war industries of Upper Silesia, without the surplus wheat and barley of Rumania and Hungary, surplus which may be made to balance the deficit caused by the loss of the Ukraine, without the bauxite of Hungary, vital to the aircraft industry, and above all without the railway system which, radiating from Budapest, nourishes alike the Balkans and the Reich—without all these the German war potential would be crippled.

At the same time, without the 400,000 Rumanian soldiers, Kleist could not begin to hold even that shorter front to which he is retiring, nor could Manstein hold without his 350,000 Hungarians—though indeed both would do well to remember that what is true of the Finns is true too of others; people who have talked peace have done with the war. At the same time, it will be to safeguard these brittle Allies and the economic necessities that the Wehrmacht will stand. That is the front which Kleist and Manstein have now reached or are now reaching, and which the Red Army must break in order alike to win a local decision and to create a wider opportunity for the second front.

GOEBBELS CANNOT SAVE GERMANY.

FAILURE OF "BOLSHEVIK BOGEY" TRICK.

Ever since the tide of war began to turn against Germany in the East, Goebbels has been running the Bolshevik bogey for all it was worth. His aim was threefold: to enlist the sympathy of neutral nations; to sow dissension and misgiving among the Allies; and to revive the flagging enthusiasm of the satellites.

He has now had to confess openly that the whole campaign has fallen completely flat. The neutrals and the enemies, he complains, still maintain "scepticism" despite all German exhortations, and he could have added that the necessity of subjugating satellite Hungary was a proof of failure there also. The Jews, as usual, are represented as the culprits who have thwarted him in his benevolent endeavours towards mankind. What he has in reality discovered is that though he may be able to fool all the herrenvolk all the time, he cannot deceive others.

The trick of producing the Bolshevik bogey to serve the Nazi ambition is too transparent to delude anybody. Goebbels, as he is at last beginning to realise, is not

going to rescue Germany from defeat by any manoeuvre of that kind. It is indeed a good evidence of the plight into which Germany has fallen that he can think of nothing better. Germany is the only menace that continues to loom large on the horizon, and the United Nations, with the sympathy of the neutral nations, will relax no effort until that menace is abolished for ever.

END OF "NEW ORDER" IN EUROPE.

HITLER'S ALLIES IN SHACKLES.

(*From the Daily Herald*).

Marshal Antonescu of Rumania follows Admiral Horthy of Hungary to Hitler's headquarters.

Horthy was trapped. He went hoping to persuade the Fuehrer to allow a withdrawal of the Hungarian troops from Russia. He found instead that German troops were moving to occupy his country and that he himself was a prisoner.

Either he yielded to the pressure and agreed to appoint a Quisling Premier controlled by a Nazi gaueliter, or the orders were issued without his consent but in his name. It matters little which.

Antonescu goes to Hitler with the full knowledge what awaits him. He will be commanded to place the Rumanian army and the whole State apparatus under complete German control. Presumably, since he has gone, he is ready to obey. If not, it will make small difference.

The Germans have a Quisling ready to hand in Horia Simra the notorious Iron Guard leader. So Rumania follows Hungary. Bulgaria will follow Rumania. And the lesser satellites as well—Slovakia and Croatia.

The "New Order" is ended. The Satellite system has collapsed. The German Government takes over direct control of the whole Balkan-Danube area. It does so because the satellite Governments could no longer be trusted to be loyal to the Reich.

The Germans are still haunted by the memory of what happened in the Balkans in the autumn of 1918. This time they will run no risk. Since Hitler's allies cannot be relied upon, they must be shackled.

BRITAIN'S TECHNICAL SUPREMACY.

IMPORTANCE OF THERMIONIC VALVE.

(*Alaric Jacob, the Moscow Correspondent of the Daily Express*).

Russia's immense admiration for Britain's technical supremacy is one of the many links which will continue to combine the two Allies after the war.

The Soviet people, who admit they have much to learn from England, appreciate above all the special skill of the British worker. They admire his world record of maximum individual output, and know that if Russia's population of 190 million had proportionately as many industrial technicians as Britain possesses most of Stalin's post-war problems would vanish.

The lines of production in which Russia seeks chiefly to emulate Britain are: development of light industry with electric power, her outstanding aeroplane production, her leadership in television and radio, railway electrification, shipbuilding, housebuilding and architectural development, such as is seen in municipal settlements, and the efficiency of the Royal Navy.

DEEP INTEREST IN BRITISH CULTURE.

Apart from the technical side, the Russian people are deeply interested in British culture. "They want to learn more of our literature, our theature, our games and the British people's way of life". They are eager to assimilate British ideas, for the British war effort has taught them that they have much to learn from the West.

Among British industries, whose post-war output will benefit immensely from war-time research, London industrial circles make special mention of the radio industry. They point out that in this field, above all, British scientists have made great advances of incalculable aid to the Allied war effort, advances which, after the war, will react to the benefit of ordinary households throughout the world. Special attention is called to the potentialities of the thermionic valve. In fact, one expert foresees a whole new range of industries and services centred round this valve after the war. The first and main practical development will be in cooking and heating. Thermionic heating does with heat what a transmitter valve in a radio station has done with sound. Two examples are given of its application. Firstly, it will enable a complete meal to be cooked in three minutes and secondly, it will enable houses to be warmed at an exceedingly low cost.

London industrial circles add that the same principles will be used in making furniture and furnishings from plastics, glass and ceramics more quickly and more chiefly than ever before. Thermionic valves vary in size, from four feet long and a foot and eight inches in diameter to handle 400,000 watts in a radio transmitter, to one inch long and three quarters of inch in diameter for the receiption of very high frequencies. The valve in the three minutes cooker of to-morrow will be about nine inches long.

MORE SHIPS AGAINST JAPAN.

NEW BATTLE FLEET AUGMENTS BRITAIN'S NAVAL STRENGTH IN FAR EAST.

(A. J. McWhinne).

Interest in the war at sea shifts from one theatre of operations to another. But as the momentum increases, one is able to form a more complete picture of the main naval battle fronts on which the fiercest sea war in history is being waged—an area extending over 125 million square miles. Let us take a look at the situation as it is to-day.

The Indian Ocean (28,350,000 sq. miles). British submarine flotillas are operating against Japanese ships in and around Malacca Straits. But Japan realises only too well that for months the increasing British naval strength in the Indian Ocean has not been confined to submarines. The South-East Asia Command needs a powerful naval force to back the British seaborne forces, which will eventually land on territory now occupied by the Japanese. There was proof of this mounting British naval strength in the Far East when Mr. Churchill, in his recent broadcast, announced that a powerful battle fleet had been placed under Admiral Somerville in Indian waters, "in order to face the main part of the Japanese Fleet should it turn westwards after having declined battle against the Americans."

BERLIN'S CLAIM.

Meanwhile, British forces in the Indian Ocean must be constantly prepared for Jap submarine activity, whether the main Jap fleet moves westwards or not. Berlin declares that German submarines, too, are operating in the Indian Ocean.

The Pacific (63,986,000 sq. miles). Mr. Churchill's hope for a speedier victory against Japan than he believed possible a year ago is based largely on the fact that Japan's shortage of aircraft-carriers, light cruisers, destroyers and freighters—particularly tankers—is growing more acute. Australian and United States forces have been proving, during the past few months, that Japan is unable to hold her outer defence line in the Pacific. As her own shipping resources decline, so Allied naval, air and shipping strength increases. Japan can no longer move superior armies by sea under adequate air cover provided by her navy. The Allies can.

The Mediterranean (1,145,000 sq. miles). The Allies are now feeling the benefit of being able to run the Middle East and Far East convoys straight through the Mediterranean, thereby saving many days' steaming for each ship on each run. This, in turn, sets free more merchant tonnage.

Germany still has fast motor warships—known as "E-boats"—in the Mediterranean. There are some German U-boats, too, there. German airfields line the Mediterranean on the southern coast of France, Northern Italy, in Greece, Crete and the Dodecanese. From these airfields, German aircraft can make sunset attacks on Allied convoys. No secret is made in London of the fact that British ships have been lost during the recent big scale operations in the Mediterranean. Ships have also been damaged. But, fortunately for the Allies, at no point are their Mediterranean ships far from Allied ports, to which they can be towed for at least temporary repair. With so much Allied shipping in the Mediterranean, the chances of rescuing survivors from ships which have been sunk are enhanced.

The Atlantic (31,530,000 sq. miles). U-boats are being sunk every week by British naval, air and anti-submarine forces. U-boat commanders are still showing caution about attacking well-screened convoys. There is as yet no indication, despite Berlin's threats, of German scientists having devised any new submarine weapon capable of changing the course of the Battle of the Atlantic.

JAPANESE NAVAL LOSSES.

(The Naval Correspondent of the Manchester Guardian).

As the war at sea progresses, experience teaches caution in the assessment of enemy losses. In no department is this better appreciated than in that of Anti-Submarine Warfare. Indisputable evidence has to be produced before the Admiralty will admit a claim to have destroyed a U-boat.

In Washington, similar views prevail. Recently, the United States Navy Department issued a revised summary of Jap losses up to October 1943, based on a careful sifting of all reports received. This must have been a task of exceptional complexity, for much of the fighting has been done by aircraft, which are seldom able to remain over their targets long enough to observe the final results. Accurate identification of an enemy warship by categories, to say nothing of definite types, is also very difficult from the air, even for a trained naval observer.

ANOTHER HANDICAP.

Another handicap is the fact that most of the surface actions in the Pacific have taken place at night. Others are the remoteness of Japan's main bases, rendering them almost immune from observation and the virtual impossibility of maintaining an effective system of espionage in an oriental country without land-frontiers.

It has been established beyond reasonable doubt that two Japanese battleships have been sunk, both in the battle of Guadalcanal in November, 1912. They probably belonged to the obsolescent *Kongo* class. Six aircraft-carriers are considered to have been lost, these presumably being the *Akagi*, *Kaba*, *Tyunkaku*, *Hiryu*, *Soryu*, and *Ryuzuo*. Evidently, the claim of the United States Army bombers to have destroyed the last named ship, off the Eastern Solomons, in August 1942, is considered to have been confirmed.

In cruisers, the conservative figure of 24 is regarded by the Navy Department as a reasonable one. This represents a considerable scaling down of various claims put forward which, if accepted without reserve, would have yielded a total of at least 40 up to October last.

CRUISERS AND DESTROYERS.

At the start of the war, Japan possessed at least 35 cruisers, besides some old vessels rated as coast defence ships, and others used for training, in peace-time. This allows nothing for the probable secret construction of new ships, which may have increased the cruiser force by ten or a dozen.

Similarly, cautious views are taken concerning destroyer losses. Claims in this category had reached a total of over 100 up to October. This the Navy Department has reduced to 62 certain and 18 more probable.

When it is remembered that further losses have been inflicted in recent months, it will be found that the foregoing figures do not materially affect the position. The losses remain so severe that the Jap navy must be finding it hard to collect enough aircraft-carriers, cruisers and destroyers to constitute a balanced fleet with which to oppose the growing Allied forces. This alone is sufficient explanation of the enemy's failure to offer any naval resistance to the recent attacks on Truk and Mariana Islands.

A CAMPAIGN OF MANOEUVRE,

JAP MOVE ON INDO-BURMESE FRONT.

(From The Times).

The General Staff of the Japanese Army has long held to the maxim that counter-attack is the best defence against attack, and this classical doctrine furnishes the key by which the enemy's latest move on the Indo-Burmese front is to be interpreted.

He is attempting to relieve pressure on his left in the Arakan, and on his right in the far north of Burma, by a counterstroke in the centre.

Complete success would enable him to threaten the communications of Allied forces in north eastern Assam, and partial success, by compelling the evacuation of the Chin Hills, would improve his defensive position on the border and, perhaps, assist his right and left wings, by diverting reinforcements of aircraft and ground troops which would otherwise be used against them. Small parties of his troops are stated to have crossed the border into Manipur State, not a difficult exploit before lightly equipped groups in a rugged land of mountains and forests, where no continuous line of defence is possible, but one of which his propaganda service will doubtless make the most.

SHORTLIVED ANNOYANCE.

Such infiltrations are only of importance if they can be supported by large and well-equipped forces. Otherwise, they are at the most a shortlived annoyance. What matters most is the strength and direction of the enemy's main thrusts, and the nature of the country through which he must march and fight, before he can threaten our communications or drive our forces from the Chin Hills.

The country through which the enemy is trying to make his way is a belt of varying width, less than 20 miles near Tammu and three times that distance in the Chin Hills, which lies between the Chindwin River and the crests of mountains dividing India and Burma. There are few ways through parallel ranges and heavily wooded heights, and fewer still which can carry heavy traffic.

The South-East Asia Command reports movements of raiding columns, which would seem to have taken off from Tamanthi and Homalin on the Chindwin through the difficult Somra Hill tracts.

On the other hand, the appearance of Japanese forces in some strength at Thaungdut on the river, less than 20 miles from Tammu, the head of our motor road to Imphal in Manipur, may indicate a plan to force the principal pass from Burma into India and descend into the Manipur lowlands. *(Tammu is now in Japanese hands—Ed.)*

Whether the enemy is attacking Tiddim directly, or whether this is one of the most advanced positions in this area which has been evacuated "to deal with the Japanese outflanking movements" is not yet clear, and may not be until the situation has become less fluid.

This is clearly a campaign of manoeuvre, in which either side must use every endeavour to conceal its intentions from the other. Here the Allies have one constant factor in their favour: an air force probably superior in numbers, and certainly of a far higher quality, than anything the Japanese can produce in the Burmese skies.

JAPANESE ON DEFENSIVE IN PACIFIC.

COMING ADDITION OF BRITISH TO AMERICAN FLEET.

(*From the Times*).

The conquest of Lorengau, the last Japanese stronghold in the Admiralty Islands, has completed a brief and brilliant campaign.

It began on February 29, with the capture of the Momote airfield on the Los Negros island. This important position was surprised and stormed by the American dismounted cavalry who, having been sent on a reconnaissance in force, effected an unexpected penetration of the Japanese defences, and held their ground against repeated counter-attacks, and after receiving reinforcements completed the seizure of all but the most marshy tracts of the island.

The first landing on Manus, by far the largest of the Admiralties, was, accomplished on March 15, and although the enemy fought with his usual fanaticism, the Allied forces now hold the sea, the Eagle Harbour and the hills that dominate it, as well as the airstrip of Lorengau, and the Japanese garrisons have been driven into the hills and jungles of the interior where its remnants are being hunted down. With these air bases and a defensible harbour in their hands, the Allies now control the sea routes leading from the north and north-west to the isolated hostile bases of Kavieng in New Ireland and Rabaul in New Britain. The prospects of their relief, or indeed of any supply from the Carolines or the East Indies, are small indeed.

The Japanese Government unquestionably realise the dangers involved in the loss of their former command of the "Southern Seas". General Tojo's warnings and admonitions have been too frequent to leave any doubt on this head. His reference to the urgency of the need for more shipping and more aircraft are not stereotyped appeals to industrial workers to expedite production in the factory and shipyard. They confess the gravity of the losses inflicted by sea and air on those very forces without whose aid hundreds of thousands of soldiers of the proud and formidable Japanese army, are doomed to become prisoners within their oversea conquests.

To the almost daily attrition of the enemy's shipping, his smaller warships, and his air force, in the South-western and Central Pacific campaigns, must be added the steady destruction of his transports, tankers and cargo ships in the East Indian, Chinese and even Japanese waters, by increasingly powerful flotillas of American submarines, and it is gratifying to learn from a recent announcement by the Admiralty that British submarines are now operating successfully off Sumatra, off the Nicobars and at the entrance to the Straits of Malacca.

Construction of small wooden ships in great numbers and barges in occupied territories offers no solution of the problem which the Allied sea power has set to Japan. Barges and similar craft can ferry troops and stores from port to port creeping along the coast, trusting to the night for protection and when crossing straits, or evading hostile patrols. But they are helpless against attack by aircraft or the lightest warships, and during the last six months their use has entailed a loss of life, probably exceeding that sustained in the fiercest island battles. And while the aid they or the larger ships,

which the enemy still risks on occasions, can bring to the beleaguered islands is diminishing in quantity, the Japanese battle-fleet seems to have retired altogether from the scene.

Since the defeat of four and the destruction of two of its units off Guadalcanal in mid-November of 1942, it has left island after island to be conquered or neutralised. It has withdrawn from Truk, and all available evidence suggests that it is being reserved for the protection of home and Chinese waters.

The sea power which it rashly challenged has forced it to the defensive; the coming addition of the British to the American naval strength in the Far East will further reduce its importance even as "a fleet in being".

PERSIAN MISSION LEADER'S IMPRESSIONS OF INDIA.

" Both India and Iran, as inheritors of two most ancient civilizations and cultures, will have an important part to play in the post-war world; both of them have much to learn from each other ", said His Excellency Ali Asghar Hikmat, Leader of the Persian Cultural Mission, in a statement giving his impressions of three weeks' tour of India.

The following is the full text of the statement: " We have been touring India for three weeks, and during this short period we have visited nine of the most important Universities, and many educational and cultural centres in the North and South India. We have seen libraries, museums, industrial and agricultural institutions and ancient monuments and have had the benefit of discussions and consultations with the authorities concerned.

" The thing that has created a profound impression on our minds, and which indeed has come to us as a pleasant surprise is the fact that in spite of the conditions brought about by the war, educational and cultural institutions in India are not only being maintained at their pre-war level but are also showing definite signs of progress. While no doubt from each university young men have gone out of to fight for their country, and in well equipped science laboratories Indian scientists are making their contribution to the war against the forces of evil, still the pursuit of arts and sciences goes on as ever. This shows that while India is in the war she has been mercifully spared its horrors, a blessing for which the mighty Allied services and the Government and the peoples of British India and the Indian States deserve the highest praise.

EXCELLENT MORALE.

" We have been-so to say-eye-witnesses to the excellent morale of our Indian cousins. It was in course of our tour that Japan ventured to cross the Assam frontier into India. Yet everywhere that we went we found a sense of confidence underlying all the war and non-war activities.

" Ours is the first cultural mission that has come to India and will, we hope, be the prelude to many such contacts. We are sincerely grateful to the Government of India for making it possible for us to study the educational and cultural conditions of this country at first hand. We are also grateful for this to our own Government who, under

the inspiring leadership of His Majesty the Shah of Iran, are playing their full part in contributing to the final victory of the United Nations, of which Iran too is a proud member.

" Brief as our stay in this country has been, we have learnt many things and made many contacts which we hope will prove of the highest value in furthering the object of our mission, namely that the two great and ancient nations of the East, India and Iran, which have sprung from a common stock and have a common cultural heritage, should renew and revitalize their centuries old ties, and as in the past make yet another lasting contribution to civilization and humanity after the war.

EXCHANGE OF STUDENTS, LITERATURE AND EXHIBITS.

" Wherever we went, we were given a warm welcome, and were assured of the fullest sympathies of the authorities of Universities and other institutions for our schemes for exchange of students and professors between Indian Universities and our own University of Teheran, and developing a new relationship such as correspondence and exchange of literature and exhibits etc. Just at a time when the world is passing throgh the horrors of war, and the very foundations of organised culture and civilization seem to be shaking, it may seem a little incongruous to talk of culture and cultural missions. But, as the old Persian saying goes, " Blessed are those that look ahead". With the help of God, final victory will undoubtedly be ours, and a new world of peace and security will be built on the ruins of the war. Both India and Iran, as inheritors of the two most ancient civilizations and cultures, will have an important part to play in the post-war world ; they have much to learn from each other."

GREAT " LE SOIR " HOXA.

When the Belgian underground recently substituted an edition of its own for the regular German-dominated edition of *Le Soir* of Brussels, it not only pulled off a great hoax but also dealt the Nazi oppressors a bitter blow. It laughed at them, cleverly and contemptuously.

The substitute edition resembled the original so closely that 35,000 to 40,000 copies were sold from news-stands, before the Nazis discovered that it was not what it seemed to be. The underground workers somehow managed to " kidnap " the entire German edition just as it was ready for distribution.

One of the leading articles is headed " The Strategy of Expediency ", and is dated from Berlin. The German military commentator whose name is assigned to it begins with the words: " To make the official military communiqué more understandable let us review the sources from which we regularly receive news."

Then he proceeds to list them: Well-informed Berlin military circles, generally well-informed Berlin military circles, the heavenly spheres, the highest authorities, the personalities most seen in the capital of the Reich, the men of the street, the soldier from the front.

Then letting his readers in on a big revelation, he concludes: "We are not betraying a secret in telling you that the Bolshevik Army has been annihilated six and one half times since June, 1941, according to the most conservative estimates. That is nothing. But it can be foretold that when, under the furious blows of the elastic defence, the Soviets shall have been totally wiped out for the 19th or 20th time, we shall ask ourselves if the winner of the war is indeed the one we think."

The laughter in Belgium has been long and loud.

Members of the public are requested to make a free present of any suitable old Tamil books they can spare for the persual, in their leisure time, of our soldiers outside India.

Books so given will be handed over to the Superintendent of the State Press, who will arrange to despatch them.

PUDUKKOTTAI STATE NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU.

PROGRAMME.

LECTURE CXCIV. (*Batch 4*).

22- 4-44	Municipal Office	...	6.00 p.m.
23- 4-44	Nirpalani	...	7.00 „
„	Avur	...	7.30 „
24- 4-44	Puttambur	...	7.00 „
„	Vaittikkovil	...	7.30 „
25- 4-44	Vadavalam	...	7.00 „
„	Sammattividuthi	...	7.30 „
26- 4-44	Ariyur	...	7.00 p.m.
„	Annavasal	...	7.30 „
27- 4-44	Andakkulam	...	7.00 „
„	Killanur	...	7.30 „
28- 4-44	Kodumbalur	...	7.00 „
„	Viralur	...	7.30 „

LECTURE CXCV. (*Batch 5*).

29- 4-44	Municipal Office	...	6.00 p.m.
30- 4-44	Alangudi	...	7.00 „
„	Rasiamangalam	...	7.30 „
1- 5-44	Tirumayyam	...	7.00 „
„	Melur	...	7.30 „
2- 5-44	Pallivasal	...	7.00 p.m.
„	Pillamangalam	...	7.30 „
3- 5-44	P. Puduppatti	...	7.00 „
„	Vendampatti	...	7.30 „
4- 5-44	Ambukkovil	...	7.00 „
„	Regunathapuram	...	7.30 „
5- 5-44	Arimalam	...	7.00 „

RECRUITING—ADVERTISEMENT—4 p. m.

22—4—44	Tirumayyam.
23—4—44	Marudankonviduthi.
25—4—44	Vadakadu.
26—4—44	Karambakkudi.
27—4—44	Kulipirai.
28—4—44	Pudukkottai.
29—4—44	Vettamviduthi.
30—4—44	Embal.
2—5—44	Kudumiyamalai.
3—5—44	Rayavaram.
4—5—44	Kilanilai.
5—5—44	Arimalam.

Sri Brihadamba State Press, Pudukkottai. 600—23-4-44.